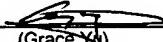


I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as Express Mail, Airbill No. EV 521939980 US, in an envelope addressed to: MS AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date shown below.

Dated: October 15, 2004 Signature: 
(Grace Y. Li)

Docket No.: 322732000401
(PATENT)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:
Yoichi TAKAHAMA et al.

Application No.: 10/028,172

Art Unit: 1648

Filed: December 21, 2001

Examiner: B. Li

For: DIAGNOSTIC REAGENT FOR HEPATITIS C
VIRUS INFECTION

AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL ACTION (37 C.F.R. §1.116)

MS AF
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

This is in response to the final Office Action dated June 15, 2004, for which a response was due on September 15, 2004. Filed herewith is a Petition and fee for a one month extension of time, thereby extending the deadline for response to October 15, 2004. Accordingly, this response is timely filed.

Applicants have given careful consideration to the grounds for rejection. The following amendments and remarks are believed to place this application in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.